



What You Should Know About METH

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Methamphetamine, also known as meth, is a central nervous system stimulant with high potential for abuse and dependence. In recent years meth has exploded into North Dakota, destroying lives and families along the way. Meth is a major concern for North Dakota's citizens and law enforcement because it is known to induce violent, erratic behavior in users. That behavior puts the community and law enforcement at risk. Because meth is an extremely addictive drug, the demand for the drug provides dealers with a considerable market.

Local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies are deeply committed to the elimination of meth and other dangerous drugs in North Dakota, and have been working together on task forces throughout the state. Educating the community about the hazards of methamphetamine is critical to our ability to successfully address methamphetamine issues in our state.

Manufacturing Meth

Meth is highly toxic ~ a batch may include battery acid, drain cleaner, antifreeze, paint thinner, and starter fluid, depending on the recipe.

Manufacturing meth does not require high tech equipment or a knowledge of chemistry. It can be produced in a makeshift lab that will fit in a small cardboard box or a cooler, and it only takes a few hours to make. Labs operate from private homes, motel rooms and apartment buildings, even abandoned buildings and cars.

- Each pound of meth produces 5 to 6 pounds of toxic waste.

Meth labs are hazardous and explosive, even when abandoned. The combination of chemicals can cause toxic fumes, fire or even explosions, posing a significant risk to local residents as well as emergency personnel.

The Dangers:

Even more alarming is the rapid increase in clandestine labs in North Dakota ~ especially in isolated rural areas. Meth “cooks” favor rural areas because of the availability of anhydrous ammonia and the difficulty of enforcement over such great distances.

Meth has gained popularity so quickly because it is cheap and easy to make ... but the substances used are toxic, and even minimal use can result in addiction.

Dealers tempt potential users with stories of improved strength and physical abilities, or increased energy, and tell them it can help them lose weight ... but they don't mention any of the risks or side effects.

Meth acts by changing how the brain works. Users may stay awake for several days without eating— causing extreme weight loss. The strain on the body is enormous and can cause permanent damage. With high doses or continued use, paranoia sets in, along with violent mood swings and hallucinations.

Dealers and users can become desperate and violent — increasing the risks to law enforcement officers and the public.

Meth ... Meth is known by many street names, including:

- Crank, Crystal, Speed, Ice, Zip, Go-fast, CR, Powder, Rock, Chicken, Bird, Jet Fuel, Spin ...

Meth users may describe getting high as being:

- Amped ... Buzzed ... Jacked ... Tweeking ... Geeking ... Spun-Out.

Meth use and addiction causes physical symptoms, including:

- ACNE, nausea, vomiting, DIARRHEA, depression, dizziness, SORES, itchy skin, numbness, sweating, TREMORS, confusion, blurred vision, ULCERS, twitches, hallucinations, seizures, PARANOIA, excessive weight loss and brain damage.

Stay Safe: Watch for these signs of a lab in your neighborhood:

- unusual late night behavior;
- strong smell of ammonia, ether, toluene, acetone or other chemicals;
- lots of traffic and frequent visitors stopping for only a short time, particularly at night;
- renters who pay cash and are willing to pay inflated prices;
- excessive amounts of trash.

Suspected drug activity or labs should be reported to local law enforcement office or BCI Drug Hotline: 1-800-472-2185.

Retail Restrictions: In an effort to stop the manufacture of meth in North Dakota, new laws restricting the sale of all cough, cold, and allergy medicines containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine took effect on June 1, 2005.

Beginning June 1st:

- Retailers cannot sell more than 2 packages (containing a maximum of 2 grams of ephedrine or pseudoephedrine) of these medicines in a single sale. The retailer must keep the packages behind the counter, under constant video surveillance, or display only 1 package of each medicine on the shelf
- The retailer must keep a written log of each purchase. The log must include the purchaser's name, address, date of birth, and identification number (but not the phone number). Because this information has to be kept confidential, the retailer cannot ask the purchaser to fill out the log, and the log must be kept out of sight of the general public.